Modernisation of airport at Madurai

3100. SHRIMATI S. G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of funds allocated for expansion/modernisation of airport at Madurai;

(b) what is the progress of work; and

(c) by when the work will be completed?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN): (a) Airports Authority of India (AAI) has plans to resurface/strengthen and extend the existing runway up to 7500 feet at a cost of Rs. 20 crores, including the cost of land and to construct a new terminal building at a cost of Rs. 10 crores. AAI has already deposited Rs. 3.05 crores with the State Government for acquisition of 60 acres land. An amount of Rs. 1 crore has been earmarked in the Annual Plan for the year 2002-2003 for the above project.

(b) Construction of terminal building is at planning stage. Runway extension will be undertaken only after State Government hands over the requisite land free from all encumbrances.

(c) The runway work will take about 18 months from the date of commencement of work and terminal building work will take about 24 months from the date of award of work.

DGCA as a regulator for airlines

3101. SHRI R. P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a proposal has been formulated to convert the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) into an independent regulator for the airline sector; and

(b) if so, the details thereof, including the structure and scope of activities and responsibilities of the regulator, especially those relating to technical and economic issues and its present status?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN): (a) At present, no such proposal is

under consideration of the Government. However, Directorate General of Civil Aviation among other things already regulates safety aspects of airlines.

(b) Does not arise.

Losses due to non-operation of flights to Pakistan

†3102. SHRI P. K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the flights which operated *via* Pakistan and the names of the flights of Pakistan which operated *via* India prior to 1st January, 2002;

(b) whether Government have imposed ban on the flights bound for the other country passing through Pakistan *w.e.f.* 1st January, 2002; and

(c) if so, the alternative measures taken by Government and the additional financial burden likely to be borne by the passengers?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN): (a) Air India and Indian Airlines were operating 37 and 11 flights respectively in both directions overflying Pakistani air space connecting various destinations in Gulf/Middle East, Europe and USA before 1st January, 2002. Pakistan International Airlines was operating a total of 54 flights in both directions overflying Indian airspace connecting South-East Asia and Far East.

(b) Pakistan has banned flights of Indian carriers overflying Pakistani airspace.

Indian carriers are flying longer route avoiding Pakistani airspace. This has resulted in an annual extra expenditure of about Rs. 45 crores. However fares have not been increased as other competing foreign carriers have kept fares unchanged as they do not have to bear this extra expenditure. Passengers are thus unaffected.

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.